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have been born to him, his wife and children live with him. It is he who faces the dangers of the jungles, and risks his life for wife and children. In his wife's clan he occupies a very high place, he is second to none but *u kni*, the maternal uncle, while in his own family circle a father and husband is nearer to his children and his wife than *u kni*. The Khasi saying is, "*u kpa uba lah ban iai, u kni uba tang ha ka iap ka im*," which may be translated freely as, "the father bears the heat and burden of the day, the maternal uncle only comes when it is a question of life or death." The Khasi father is revered not only when living, but also after death as *U Thawlang*, and special ceremonies are performed to propitiate his shade. Further remarks on the subject of marriage will be found in the Section which deals with religion.

DIVORCE.

Divorce amongst the Khasis is common, and may occur for a variety of reasons, such as adultery, barrenness, incompatibility of temperament, &c. The rule amongst the Khasis is that both parties must agree, but amongst the Wars, especially the people of Shella, the party who divorces the other without his or her consent must pay compensation, which is called *ka mynrain*, or *ka thuem*. Amongst the Khasis it is not the custom to enforce restitution of conjugal rights; as a rule, when husband and wife cannot live together amicably, they agree to divorce one another; but occasionally it happens that either the husband or the wife will not agree to a divorce. Usually the husband would be willing to live with his wife; but when the latter consents neither to live with her husband nor to accept a divorce, a difficult situation arises, and it is in the event of such a contingency happening that the necessity of assessing *ka mynrain*, or *ka thuem* (compensation), occurs. The latter is computed by the village elders. Parties who have been divorced cannot afterwards remarry one another, but they are at liberty to marry into other families. A woman cannot be divorced during pregnancy. The following description of the divorce ceremony is taken from U Jeebon Roy's note on the

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be placed in the family tomb. There are special taboos for certain clans, of which the following are some examples. The clan Nongtathiang cannot eat the lemon, the Khar-umnuid clan must abstain from pork, the Cherra Siem family cannot eat dried fish, and the Siem family of Mylliem taboo the pumpkin. Possibly these taboos may be relics of totemism amongst these communities. The following are some of the other taboos, although some of them are but lightly regarded now-a-days.

(i.) To build a house with stone walls on all four sides.

(ii.) To use nails in building a house.

(iii.) To use more than one kind of timber in building the hearth.

(iv.) To build a house with resinous timber. Only the Siem family can use such timber.

(v.) To cut trees from a sacred forest.

(vi.) To take or give anything with the left hand.

(vii.) To step over any one's body.

(viii.) To kill any animal or bird without first throwing rice over its body.

(ix.) To drink the milk of a cow or goat.

(x.) To talk with any one, except with one of a man's or woman's fellow-workers, when the thrashing of paddy is going on.

There are the following special taboos for pregnant women.

(*a*) To accompany a funeral procession.

(*b*) To finish any sewing she may have commenced before she became *enceinte*. There is a similar prohibition regarding the finishing of the plaiting of wicker baskets.

(*c*) It is *sang* for the husband of a pregnant woman to thatch the ridge of the house at such a time, or to fix a handle to an axe or a *dao*.

household deities, and measles and smallpox deities. 776
Deities of the first two categories are simply aspects 771
of the high God or Goddess. • The earth is peopled with two great orders of land demons and water demons who cause all undesirable, unnatural, and otherwise inexplicable events, acting either on their own or as instruments in the hands of sorcerers. Apart from omens, both in nature and in dreams, 787
Khasis attach supernatural significance also to mystic 822
numbers, and to the colors white, black, and red. They hold especially important folk beliefs regarding 824
betel nut, paddy rice, gold and silver, and clothing.
Practitioners. The two classes of religious practition- 791
ers are the village or state priests and the sacrificers. 793
Both are male. They use the same divinatory tech- 754
niques of reading broken eggshells and the entrails of cocks, and they both sacrifice cocks, hens, goats, pigs, and cattle. Their skills are not taught to them so much as picked up by observation and confirmed by demonstrations of efficacy. A priest is elected from among the men of his sib to direct his skills to the public good until he dies, and his rewards are institutionalized and come from the village or the state. A sacrificer acts for private persons or kin groups, on call, and is rewarded by them personally with gifts in cash or in kind. The sacrificer is called upon to explain and then to ritually remedy every variety of misfortune, especially illness, though his powers are nowadays regarded with ambivalence, and he is widely expected to become a sorcerer sooner or later. • There are two major types of sor- 754
cerer. One is the ritual specialist or sacrificer who secretly turns his skills from good to evil, manipulating demons to injure a person or kin group, and acting always for himself alone out of considerations of jealousy or revenge. The other is normally a leading citizen, a woman who is so wealthy and successful that it is believed that she must keep a *thlen*, i.e. a creature which will bring her prosperity as long as she feeds it periodically with human blood. To provide this blood, the men of her household, or other males whom she bewitches with a special whisky, will indiscriminately murder anyone except a mem- [184]
ber of her matrilineage. The Jaintias have an analogue to the *thlen* in their *taro*, except that the ultimate result is death from illness rather than murder. Minor witchcraft can be perpetrated by poison keepers or persons with an evil eye, who are often women. **Ceremonies.** The important traditional 843
ceremonies were the life-crisis rituals relating to 844
pregnancy and childbirth, the naming of a child, and 553
death. Lesser ceremonies related to marriage and 764
divorce, and to housebuilding. All these rituals were 585
addressed primarily to the ancestors, and they are 586
still performed in modified form by many Khasis. 342
Other rituals, which were performed by groups such 769
as villages, sibs, local descent groups, or households, 178
were addressed to the unnamed aspects of the high 782